

the profession to take advantage of the opportunity to have their performances properly seen, which is afforded by the new institution, so that an anticipation of excellence may be anticipated. In the present exhibition there are many good and few really bad pictures.

Mr. R. S. Lauder, R.S.A. is very prominent; no one understands better than he does the theory and practical resources of colour. The free use of the "chromatic scale," rendered subservient by his knowledge of the value of middle tone, singularizes him wherever present. His (31) "Christ walking on the sea" is, however, less remarkable for this than for the simple and religious feeling with which it has been conceived. All must admire the spiritual and grand expression of the head, the quiet majestic position, and the extremely clever management of the light. It is a fine picture, and can scarcely be viewed without emotion.

(194) "Christ denied by Peter" (by the same artist), is more remarkable for its fine colour and management of light and shade: the reflection from the fire, on which all the light depends, is singularly truthful. We are not quite satisfied with the expression of the principal figure: less of rebuke and physical suffering, and more of dignified sorrow, would better accord with the text. Still as a work of art it deserves a high place. (231) "John the Baptist in the Wilderness," is as beautifully, though more carelessly painted. (256) A graceful embodiment of Tennyson's *varagie*, "The Lady of Shalott," is admirable for all the qualities that signalize his style, and helps to make this member's contributions an exhibition in themselves.

Mr. J. E. Lauder, R.S.A. has produced a vigorously painted illustration of "The Effect of Leo the Iconoclast" (43), a fine picture, but a little disagreeable in colour. He also contributes (506) "The Widow," a loosely, but cleverly, painted interior, and several works of minor importance.

(52) "Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum," by L. W. Desanges, belongs to the Martin and Danby school. It is a little incomprehensible, but evinces both ambition and talent. We like him better in his more recognised style. (1) "Corinna, the Lyric Muse," (55) "The Favourite," (157) "A Study," and several portraits freely and gracefully painted, with now and then an unreasonably strong commingling of lamp and moonlight, assist the collection, but are scarcely up to what he can do.

An extravaganza by a P. R. B. (177), an "Incident in the Life of St. Elizabeth, of Hungary," by J. Coffman, which needs a quotation in the catalogue, shows many good points, obscured by studied artifices, and furnishes another instance of painstaking mistaken enthusiasm. The interior of the Cathedral, the pavement, with its bronzes and other separate portions well painted, are spoilt by the introduction of a number of meaningless hideous dolls, as far from nature as much of the picture is from art. The thought and earnestness shown in the work, however, save it from condemnation. In another specimen of the school (53) "The Banishment of Hamlet," all redeeming qualities have been studiously and very efficiently discarded.—(2) "The Death of the venerable Bede," by R. Barchett, is an unpleasant subject, but has something in its execution that promises good things.

(21), "The Swing," W. Underhill, a Woolmerish interpretation of Reynolds. The happy childish gleam of the occupier of the swing is successfully life-like; but the colour throughout, more especially in the flesh tones, is too violent. With careful constraint over a striking predilection for this dangerous indulgence, the artist has abilities that, if properly directed, will entitle him to a good position.

(49) "Llyn Idwal, North Wales," S. R. Percy. A beautiful landscape: the translucent water and an exquisitely painted foreground place this picture high in our estimation. The artist's best picture, however, is undoubtedly (350) "Summer—Storm clearing off." If a strict adherence to truth, a wonderful facility in representing it, and a happily chosen subject

are the essentials of a fine picture, this is one. The dividing and disappearing clouds, the lightning-stricken trees, with the branches borne down by the weight of their rain-soaked foliage, the wakened solitude of the water, with all its play beaten out of it, still overflowing by a dark overshadowing cloud, the freshness of the river herbage shining with crystal drops, are all portrayed in such an earnest unaffected style as to divide admiration between nature itself and the power of the artist. We must warn Mr. Percy, nevertheless, against repeating himself in his smaller works; these are too often alike.

(49) "An English Brook—Coming Shower," A. W. Williams. Not so successful in regard to subject-matter as his work of last year; the picture relies mainly upon the faithful presentation of its circumstances; beautifully painted as it is, it falls to interest. (311) "Snowdon" is a capital specimen, full of light and air.

To enumerate all the works by the family bearing the last name would extend our remarks further than conveniently practicable. That Nature has been their guide, their money contributions severely demonstrate.

Mr. Dighton is one of those who delight in the rugged and uncivilized. (9) "The Falls of the Ogwen" looks to have been painted on the spot.

(18) "Lime-kilns in the Highlands," by H. McCulloch, R.S.A., is painted with a masterly hand.

In fruit and still life Mr. Duffield almost equals Lance in finish and clear rich colour.

Mr. Niemann has established himself as an imaginative and poetical landscape painter by his "Fleeth Scene from Macbeth" (819). It is painted with the firmness and power of an accomplished hand. (63) "A Highland Loch," (135) "St. Michael's Church, Coventry," are other favourable specimens of his skill. We must give praise, too, to his smaller works in watercolours, which are admirable.

(66) "The Highland Sword Dance" is one of those passages in Scottish domestic life that Mr. McLean loves to represent, and knows so well how to make the most of. (319) "Highland Children going to School, Lochaber," is a still better depiction of a more interesting episode. (306) "Crossing the Brook," C. Duke, a charming little picture, better than either (186) "Le Fleur searching for the Letter," or (248) "The Whistling Boy." (130) "The Wheeler's Shop," by D. Passmore, has some elaborate manipulation in the middle distance and distance, which would have told to greater advantage had the whole of the foreground been in shadow. Last year led us to expect more from him than he has yet realized. With a passing notice of the several admirable performances contributed by Messrs. Cobbett, Earl (whose dogs deserve notice), Wingfield, Oliver, and the equally clever Mrs. Oliver, A. Montague, Barraud, Bantley, H. B. Willis (especially 57), F. W. Holmes, Miss M. Gillies (216), W. Hemmery, and an expression of praise for Mr. Talbot's charcoal or chalk portraits, we conclude our notice, and wish the Institution the success it is justly entitled to.

INVENTORS' AND ASSOCIATION.—Our readers have probably observed an advertisement, headed "Inventors' Aid Association," a title significant of its objects. We have perused the prospectus of the company, and are disposed to think that, with proper management, the association is calculated to effect good. The association proposes submitting inventions brought to them to practical men of science, and, acting under their advice, to obtain "letters patent." They propose, too, to enable the clever poor man to submit his directly patented invention to the man of capital, and thus enable him to utilize some advantageous terms than he has at present in a position to do. The constitution of the patent law will undoubtedly be the operation of such an association, but rather a relief to some extent. Patented inventions, which have passed the ordeal of the company, will have an increased chance of receiving attention from the public.

THE NEW BUILDINGS BILL.

A DEPUTATION of the Master Carpenters' Society, consisting of Mr. Higgins, Mr. Stephen Bird, Mr. Bates, and Mr. George Bird, had an interview with Lord Seymour on the 5th inst. The members urged strongly upon Lord Seymour's notice their objections to the appointment of a barrister to administer the powers of a Buildings Bill; but after hearing the objections for some time, his lordship replied "That he thought the House of Commons the best place to discuss that question."

The Builders' Society have come to the resolution, that a court of professional referees would be preferable to the law court proposed, and as questions of mere law would sometimes come before them as arbitrators, that a well qualified lawyer should be appointed to assist them when required, but without judicial authority.

We understand from good authority that the Bill will not be presented before Easter, and that in all probability a new Bill will be printed. The builders about Sydenham have had a deputation upon the Bill.

The following is the petition of the churchwardens and representative vestrymen of the parish of St. James, Westminster, to the House of Commons:—

"That a Bill is now before your honourable House, entitled the 'Metropolis Buildings Bill,' by which it is proposed to create a new court of law, to be called the Court of Metropolitan Buildings; to appoint a new judge, a deputy judge, a clerk, a deputy clerk, an architectural referee, an assistant surveyor, and other officers. The judge and deputy judge are to have the extraordinary power of instituting a fine of £500, a day, and to commit builders and others to the House of Correction for a period of three months, without bail; also to seize, not only their goods and chattels, but also any money, bills of exchange, or other securities for money which may be discovered belonging to them; and the clerk of the court is to have the power to sue to the name of the builder or party, or in the name of any person in whose name such builder or party might have sued, for the recovery of the sum or sums of money or damages payable by such securities; for money when the time of payment becomes due. A proviso excepts the wearing apparel and bedding of the unfortunate victim in the family dependent on him, and the tools and implements of his trade, to the value of the trading sum of 5*l*. No power of appeal is allowed against the decision of the judge, except upon points of law; the costs of the appeal, if against the decision of the judge, to be paid out of the funds of the court, as well as the costs of any proceeding taken by the district surveyor who may be found to be in the wrong, however veniously he may have acted; but there is no provision for the payment of the costs of the defendant, however small he may have been to obey the law. Should the general fund of the court from fees and penalties not be sufficient to pay the salaries of the judge and his officers, as well as costs incurred by them in supporting their own unlawful decisions, the deficiency is to be made good out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

That the said Bill enacts that the district surveyors, fifty-two in number, who are now appointed by the local and county authorities, shall in future be appointed by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. The incomes of these surveyors, derived from fees, amount altogether to about 20,000*l*. per annum, and their districts correspond with the parochial divisions. The said Bill re-enacts the leading provisions of the present Building Laws, viz.—the division of buildings into classes, limiting the size of the houses according to their class, and apportioning to each class of houses or buildings certain thicknesses of brick walls.—The said court of law is created with a view of enforcing these obsolete and useless restrictions.

That your petitioners consider the Metropolitan Building Acts to be enacted: the effect of injuriously limiting the class of houses, and consequently to have been the chief cause of the confined and miserable dwellings of the labouring classes in the metropolis; that they have encouraged the building, and have been the cause of covering the suburbs of the metropolis with thousands of wretched hovels, which are a disgrace to a civilized country.

That your petitioners consider, —injurious to these laws have been upon the dwellings and upon the health of the labouring classes, —that they have operated most prejudicially upon the houses of the middle classes, and have also retarded the archite-